

City of Safety Harbor Grand Tree Ordinance

Where can I find the city's tree ordinance?

The regulations pertaining to Protected Trees is in [Section 153](#) of the city Land Development Code. The regulations pertaining to Grand Trees are in Section 153.12 of the Land Development Code.

What is a Grand Tree?

To be considered for Grand Tree status, a tree must have a minimum DBH (diameter at breast height) of 26-inches, a condition rating of at least 3.5, and meet the point requirements for the species. The following table details the point requirement each species of tree must meet to be considered a Grand Tree.

Table 1.0
(Per Section 153.13 of Land Development Code)

SPECIES	MINIMUM TOTAL POINTS TO QUALIFY FOR GRAND TREE STATUS
Live Oak (<i>Quercus virginiana</i>)	145
Sand Live Oak (<i>Quercus geminata</i>)	145
Southern Magnolia (<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>)	120
Sweetbay (<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>)	120
Bald Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>)	115
Pignut Hickory (<i>Carya glabra</i>)	130
Southern Red Cedar (<i>Juniperus silicicola</i>)	115
American Elm (<i>Ulmus americana</i>)	130
Longleaf Pine (<i>Pinus palustris</i>)	115
Slash Pine (<i>Pinus elliottii</i>) (including variety 'densa')	115

How are Grand Tree points calculated?

Grand Tree points are obtained by adding the DBH, crown height, average crown spread, and the condition rating. If the potential Grand Tree meets the minimum points required for the species, the tree has reached Grand Tree status. The [Grand Tree Qualifying](#) form is used to determine if a tree meets Grand Tree status. This form, or a [No Grand Tree Removal](#) form are required for all building permits.

Can a Grand Tree be removed?

A [Tree Removal Permit](#) is required to remove a Protected Tree or Grand Tree in the City of Safety Harbor. To be removed, a Grand Tree must:

- Pose a safety hazard to pedestrians, buildings, vehicle traffic, or are within the visibility triangle OR
- Threaten to cause disruption of public services or utility services OR

- Be removed in order to construct improvements that are proposed as a result of:
 - Need for access immediately around the proposed structure for construction equipment OR
 - Need for access to the building site for construction equipment OR
 - Essential grade changes; surface water drainage and utility installations OR
 - Location of the primary building pad, primary foundation line, swimming pool, patio pad, or that portion of the driveway within the path of the garage or carport entrance, and these structures cannot be relocated OR
- Staff finds it to be in the best interest of the general public's health, safety, and welfare that the tree be removed.
- The application fee for a grand tree removal permit is \$25 for a residential parcel and \$100.00 for all other parcels.

What if the Grand Tree is hazardous?

Hazardous trees, regardless of their trunk diameter cannot attain Grand Tree status as they would not meet the condition rating requirement. Only trees with a condition rating of 3.5 or higher can attain Grand Tree status.

Is a permit required to prune a Grand Tree?

No permit is required to prune a Grand Tree; however, a [Grand Tree Pruning Affidavit](#) is required to prune any limb on a Grand Tree that is 6-inches or more in diameter (measured at the base of the limb). The Grand Tree Pruning Affidavit must be completed by an Arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture. Homeowners can prune limbs less than 6-inches in diameter without submitting a pruning affidavit.

What are the replacement requirements for Grand Trees?

When a grand tree is approved for removal, the tree shall be replaced with new tree plantings. Where a suitable location for replanting on the property is not available, a fee in lieu should be paid as specified in code section 153.07(D)(1) plus a flat fee payment into the city tree bank. The flat fee is \$1500 for homesteaded properties and \$3000 for all other properties.. Mitigation can be a combination of planting replacement trees and payment of the inch per inch removal fee. The table below shows the number of replants required for Grand Tree removals.

GRAND TREE REPLACEMENT RATIO TABLE	
TRUNK DIAMETER (DBH)	REPLACEMENT RATIO
26"-40"	3:1
41"-50"	4:1
51" OR GREATER	5:1